

**ROOMING
HOUSE**

**SOUGHT BY
FRANK**

**DECLARES
WOMAN**

Mrs. Nina Formby
Swears

Suspected Man
Wanted a
Room for Himself
and a
Girl on Murder
Night.

***TO PRESENT
AFFIDAVIT***

***TO GRAND JURY
TODAY***

Mysterious Telephone Mes- sage Caused Detectives to Interview Woman Who Conducts Rooming House.

Mrs. Nina Formby, who conducts a rooming house at 400 Piedmont Avenue, near Currier Street, Atlanta, has signed an affidavit to the effect that on April 26, 1913, Leo M. Frank called her up repeatedly by telephone and endeavored to secure a room for himself and a young girl.

The affidavit was signed Monday, May 11, 1913, but had been kept a secret. Mrs. Formby attached her signature to the document in the office of Detective Chief Lanford in police headquarters, and was sworn by Recorder Nash Broyles to the presence of Probation Officer Sidney J. Coogler. The affidavit was then turned over to Solicitor Dorsey.

Detectives say this is one of the most important bite of evidence they hold. It will, in all probability, be submitted to the grand jury when it takes up the Phagan case this morning at 10 o'clock. It was gained through a mysterious telephone call which came to police headquarters only a short while after the body had been discovered.

Some one, who refused to give a name, telephoned Chief Lanford, giving this message:

"Look up Mrs. Nina Formby. She knows more than she has told."

Signs Affidavits for Detectives.

Two detectives were assigned to search for Mrs. Formby. Within a few hours she had been located at the Piedmont apartments. Readily giving the detectives the desired information, she offered to sign an affidavit suggested by them. The following night she was interviewed by Chief Lanford and Chief Beavers, who visited her apartments. On Monday the two police officials and Solicitor Dorsey appeared at her home and asked that she come to police headquarters to sign the affidavit.

Mrs. Formby's statement to a Constitution reported yesterday afternoon was exactly what appears in the affidavit, according to Chief Lanford. She and a party of friends were playing bridge in her apartments late in the afternoon of Memorial day, she said, when Frank, whom she had known for considerable while, telephoned her.

Called Many Times.

It was between 6 o'clock and 6:30, she stated. The suspected superintendent, Leo Frank, according to her story asked over the wire for permission to rent one of her rooms that night to be used by him and a girl whose name he would not give. He was flatly refused. Mrs. Formby declared, but insisted that he be rented an apartment.

"He said that he was forced to obtain a room for him and the girl," the woman stated, "and that he didn't want to go elsewhere, because he put such implicit trust in me. I would not grant his request and hung up the telephone."

A little later, she says, Frank tele-

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phoned again, this time insistent. It was a case of life and death, she quoted him as having said.

According to her statement, Frank called Mrs. Formby at least a half dozen times, from 6:30 o'clock until 10 that night. Finally, she says, in order to stop his repeated calls, she told him not to ring her any more, as she was getting an automobile with friends.

Offered Money to Leave City.

Mrs. Formby states further that she has been made numerous offers of money to leave the city until the courts had finished with the Phagan case.

Alexander S. Martin, of Gainesville, who is connected with a newspaper of that city, will be summoned by Chief Lanford to testify to the woman's statement to the effect that she had been offered hush money. His name was taken by the chief, and he was notified that he would likely be called to Atlanta at any moment. Lanford told reporters Thursday night that he would make an immediate investigation of the reported bribery attempts.

Stating that shortly after his arrest she had visited him in the Tower, Mrs. Formby says Frank first appeared not to recognize her, but later acknowledged acquaintance, holding a secret conversation, the nature of which has not revealed. She also states that while she resided at 87 Armstrong Street Frank was a frequent visitor at her place, and had some often in company with girls.

Case Before Grand Jury Today.

The Phagan mystery goes before the Fulton grand jury this morning at 10 o'clock, it was definitely announced Thursday by Mr. Dorsey. Throughout the day he had been in conference with Chief Lanford, headquarters detective and members of his own investigating staff, arranging the evidence at hand for presentation to the jury.

Lanford Talks of Affidavit.

Chief Lanford's theory, as outlined by him last night to a Constitution reporter, is that Mary Phagan had already been knocked unconscious when the alleged telephone request was made to Mrs. Formby for a room in her place, and that Frank's plan was to remove the insensible girl to the Piedmont avenue address, where she could be revived and could be given medical treatment.

"The intentions were," the chief said, "to carry the girl to Mrs. Formby's apartments so that she could be restored to consciousness in surroundings which would not excite suspicion. The assault attempt had already been made, and Mary Phagan had been rendered insensible by the blow she received from the fall against the lathe machine.

"I believe that all the while Mrs. Formby was being telephoned, the unconscious girl was lying hidden in some part of the pencil factory, oblivious to everything, awaiting the terrible death which befell her. Mrs. Formby's statement is to the effect that Frank persisted desperately in his effort to obtain a room, and even went so far as to say it was a matter of life or death.

"When it was seen that the woman would not rent a room in her apartments, and the girl could not be removed to a place where she could be revived without creating suspicion, it was absolutely necessary to dispose of her. Dead folk tell no tales. Mrs. Formby says the telephone calls came as late as 10 o'clock, and that they did not end until she, in order to stop them,

declared she was leaving her apartments and was going on an automobile ride."

A score of detectives and deputies were busy all day subpoenaing witnesses, 100 or more of which will probably be summoned before the jury closes its investigation. It will require two days or longer for the return of either true or no bills against Frank and the negro watchman, the only names which will be submitted.

Startling developments are expected. Both Mr. Dorsey and authorities at police headquarters declare they possess evidence which has never been revealed. The affidavit attested to by Mrs. Formby evidences this fact. All parties concerned in the investigation express satisfaction over the results they say they have obtained, and are optimistic of the case's outcome.

Parrott Praises Frank.

Recommending Frank, both as a private citizen, as a business man and as an employer, George W. Parrott, a well-known man in local financial and business circles, has written the following letter to The Constitution:

"As is perhaps known by many, I am interested in the National Pencil company, and I have, with keen interest, noted, from time to time, hints and insinuations that Mr. Leo Frank has misused and mistreated female employees of the factory.

"I felt it due myself and the other gentlemen interested in the factory that as to this matter there should be a thorough investigation.

"To that end, on Wednesday, together with other gentlemen likewise interested in the factory, I interviewed every employee of the factory, both male and female.

"Every one of them without a dissenting voice, voluntarily and emphatically made affidavit that Mr. Frank

had never, at any time, or in any way, misused or mistreated them, and that none of them had ever known a single instance of any familiarity on the part of Mr. Frank with anyone of the female employees.

"These affidavits are in my possession."

"This is a matter of personal concern to me, and I beg that, in justice to myself and others interested in the factory, that this matter be set fairly right before the public."

"(Signed)"

"GEORGE W. PARROTT."